

Message Text

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ORIGIN NASA-04

INFO OCT-01 SCI-06 ISO-00 ACDA-19 MC-02 EB-11 COME-00

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 181983

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: TSPA, MA

SUBJ: RENEWAL OF NASA TRACKING STATION AGREEMENT

REF: A.) TANANARIVE 1151 B.) TANANARIVE 1190

C.) TANANARIVE 1211

BEGIN SUMMARY: IN VIEW FOREIGN MINISTER'S APPARENT
INCLINATION TO ESCALATE DEMANDS IN RETURN FOR RENEWAL
NASA TRACKING STATION AGREEMENT, DEPT AND NASA BELIEVE
NEGOTIATIONS SHOULD NOW BE SLOWED. CHANGE IN STRATEGY
WOULD BE DESIGNED TO CONVEY GENERAL IMPRESSION OF
RELAXATION AND CONFIDENCE THAT RENEWAL FORMALITIES WILL BE
MUTUALLY SATISFACTORY, EVEN IF SOME DELAY IN SETTLEMENT
OCCURS AS IN 1969, END SUMMARY

1. AS A MATTER OF TACTICS, DEPT WOULD PREFER THAT EMBASSY
DEFER FURTHER INITIATIVES REGARDING STATION RENEWAL AND
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THE SEPARATE ISSUE OF A COOPERATING AGENCY UNTIL AFTER
RATSIRAKA RETURNS FROM UNGA AS WELL AS CONCLUSION

OCTOBER ELECTIONS. RATSIRAKA HAS APPARENTLY DECIDED
UTILIZE INITIAL DIALOGUE TO PLACE GOMR IN INCREASINGLY
STRONGER BARGAINING POSITION TO DEMAND MORE THAN BASE
OFFER OF EXCESS COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT. FYI NASA HAS
NEVER ENTERED INTO A QUID PRO QUO ARRANGEMENT IN
OVER TWO DOZEN OVERSEAS STATION ARRANGEMENTS IN OVER
14 YEARS. END FYI.

2. QUESTION OF LAND RENT RAISED BY MOFA REQUIRES FURTHER
CONSIDERATION. REVIEW OF 1963 AGREEMENT NEGOTIATING
HISTORY REVEALS SPECIFIC ACTION BY GOMR TO INSERT
PROVISION FOR LAND RENT, ALTHOUGH MADE CLEAR AT THE TIME
IT DID NOT INTEND TO EXERCISE SUCH OPTION AS LONG AS AID
BEING REQUESTED SIMULTANEOUSLY WAS FORTHCOMING. ALTHOUGH
IN FINAL STAGE RENEWAL NEGOTIATION IT MAY BECOME
NECESSARY ACCEDE TO FORMAL GOMR REQUEST FOR RENTAL
PAYMENTS, BELIEVE BEST COURSE OF ACTION AT PRESENT IS
TO APPEAR RELAXED AND TO AVOID IMPRESSION OF PRESSING
FOR EARLY RENEWAL.

3. WOULD APPRECIATE AMBASSADOR'S REACTION TO FOREGOING.
RUSH

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